# MAKING THE PARKING SYSTEM WORK

# **COLUMBIA CITY PARKING ACTION STRATEGY**



# PARKING POLICY AND PLANNING SECTION POLICY, PLANNING, AND MAJOR PROJECTS DIVISION

**NOVEMBER 2003** 

SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



**CITY OF SEATTLE** 

# COLUMBIA CITY PARKING ACTION STRATEGY

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The *Columbia City Parking Action Strategy* was developed between April 2002 and September 2003 by the members of the Columbia City Parking Workgroup in conjunction with SDOT's *Making the Parking System Work* program. Existing planning documents, such as the *Columbia City/Hillman City Neighborhood Plan*, were reviewed for parking opportunities and priorities.

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Short-Term Goals:** The theme of the short-term goals is to quickly make more parking available for short-term customer parking. The Workgroup would like to see these changes made in 2003

- Goal #1: Increase On-Street Parking Create new on-street parking spaces for businesses in the downtown area, for residents, and for library patrons.
- Goal #2: Increase Enforcement for Short-Term Parking Ensure there is adequate turnover in on-street parking spaces.
- Goal #3: Increase Short-Term Parking Supply Ensure that appropriate regulations (1-hour or 2-hour time limits) exist in the commercial area for customers, clients and visitors.
- Goal #4: Install Parking Directional Signage Install directional signage to direct
  customers and visitors to the supply of on- and off-street parking available off of Rainier Ave
  S in and near the downtown business core.

**Mid-Term Goals:** In the mid-term, the goals of the workgroup are two-fold: 1) to make the best use of existing off-street parking, and 2) to create programs that educate and encourage visitor and clients about parking opportunities and encourage ways to reduce drive-alone trips to area businesses, events, and services. The workgroup intends many of these changes to be made in 2004.

- Goal #5: Develop Lot Sharing Opportunities Look for lot-sharing opportunities between the Library, Post Office, Columbia Plaza, Orca School and other neighborhood parking lots.
- Goal #6: Develop Marketing and Validation Programs Educate visitors to the Library, and area businesses and events about parking opportunities, parking courtesy, and the many means of non-drive-alone transportation to and within Columbia City.

**Long-Term Goals:** Long-term goals of the workgroup include increasing the parking-related resources the business community has at its disposal and monitoring the development of the agreement between the City and Sound Transit regarding the Edmunds Street Light Rail Station.

- Goal #7: Develop Business Access Package Develop programs that provide employees of
  area small businesses with tools and incentives for getting to work without using a car, or for
  making fewer drive-alone trips.
- Goal #8: Address Impacts from Future Developments Investigate opportunities to purchase community-owned or business-organization owned parking lots to replace existing off-street facilities as they are developed.
- Goal #9: Address Impacts from the Edmunds Light Rail Station Opening Organize
  community members to monitor Sound Transit parking-mitigation commitments for the
  estimated opening of the Edmunds Street Light Rail Station in 2009.

# COLUMBIA CITY PARKING ACTION STRATEGY

# **PROGRAM BACKGROUND**

The *Columbia City Parking Action Strategy* was developed between April 2002 and September 2003 by the members of the Columbia City Parking Workgroup in conjunction with SDOT's *Making the Parking System Work* program. Existing planning documents, such as the *Columbia City/Hillman City Neighborhood Plan*, were reviewed for parking opportunities and priorities.

Through the *Making the Parking System Work* program, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) staff collaborate with neighborhood business and community organizations to identify and implement low-cost, common-sense local parking management and access strategies. These active partnerships seek to achieve an acceptable balance of residential, visitor, business customer and employee parking in a particular neighborhood. The partnerships also create and employ techniques to reduce demand for parking spaces by promoting travel by foot, bike, bus and carpool. These techniques are also known as transportation demand management or TDM.

At the outset of each neighborhood parking planning effort, neighborhood representatives establish a Parking Workgroup comprised of residents, neighborhood planning organizations, business associations, staff from various City departments, and other key stakeholders. The intent is to create a team of "parking experts" that can formulate solutions, implement recommendations, and educate and involve others.

An effort is made in convening a Parking Workgroup to have a representative balance of parking users as members to 1) provide multiple perspectives in the development of recommendations that will be present in that neighborhood's Parking Action Strategy, and 2) so that no one parking user group will dominate the agenda. In Columbia City, workgroup members represented the Columbia City Business Association, Columbia City Revitalization Committee, and the Columbia City branch of the Seattle Public Library. Additionally representatives from Homesight, Bikeworks, Columbia City Farmers Market, and area residents attended the workgroup meetings as well.

Neighborhood parking workgroups are charged with developing a list of specific actions that the community and City can implement to better manage on-street and off-street parking and to implement TDM strategies. The *Columbia City Parking Action Strategy* represents the actions that can be taken to achieve the short-, mid- and long-term goals of the Columbia City Parking Workgroup. The recommendations in this Parking Action Strategy were presented to the neighborhood at the Columbia City Revitalization Committee's Town Hall on March 15, 2003, to solicit feedback and implementation assistance.

Additional information about the progress of the Columbia City Parking Workgroup in implementing these goals, including the January 2003 *Columbia City Neighborhood Parking Survey*, or about the *Making the Parking System Work* program can be found at www.seattle.gov/transportation/neighborhoodparking.htm or by calling (206) 684-8186.

### **OUTREACH AND PROMOTION**

Over three hundred postcards were distributed and an e-mail announcement was sent out to several neighborhood lists as outreach for the Kick-Off Meeting held on April 2, 2002. SDOT staff initiated informal interviews with a number of community members who were active in the affairs of their neighborhood, as well as with City or agency staff assigned to various projects in the community.

The recommendations of the Columbia City Parking Workgroup were presented to the community in several venues: at the March 15, 2003, annual Town Hall meeting hosted by the Columbia City Revitalization Committee (CCRC), at the October 6, 2003, meeting of the CCRC, at the November 4<sup>,</sup> 2003, meeting of the Columbia City Business Association, and via e-mail with numerous community members who had asked to be kept abreast of the Parking Workgroup activities and outcomes.

Throughout the months between the Kick-Off Meeting and the presentation of the workgroup recommendations, regular updates of workgroup meeting notes were posted to *the Making the Parking System Work* webpage and were e-mailed to the workgroup members to post to relevant community listserves. Copies of materials were placed at the Southeast Neighborhood Service Center and the Columbia City branch library as they were produced.

# **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Existing conditions data was gathered from the *Columbia City/Hillman City Neighborhood Plan*, the *Comprehensive Neighborhood Parking Study* (2000), the Columbia City Parking Kick-Off Meeting on April 2, 2002, the Columbia City Parking Walking Tour on June 25, 2002, the *Columbia City Neighborhood Parking Survey* (January 2003), field work conducted throughout the operation of the program, and other citizen comments. Existing on-street parking regulations are shown in *Map 1: Existing Conditions* (page 7).

## PARKING STUDY DATA

In September and October 1999, the City of Seattle collected data in 35 study areas in 26 of Seattle's neighborhoods as part of the *Comprehensive Neighborhood Parking Study*. The parking data below represents the area along Rainier Avenue S from Alaska Street to S Dawson Street and approximately one block one either side of Rainier Avenue S. The area contained 1,145 parking spaces: 388 on-street spaces and 757 off-street spaces (which includes 410 institutional and private off-street spaces).

As shown in Table 1, Average Utilization of parking in Columbia City is significantly lower than the City-Wide Average, whereas the Peak Utilization is equal to or somewhat higher than the City-Wide Average, specifically for On-Street Peak Utilization. Peak utilization time was between 12 noon and 1 p.m.

TABLE 1: COLUMBIA CITY PARKING USAGE								
Average Peak-Hour								
	On-Street	Off-Street	Total	On-Street	Off-Street	Total		
Columbia City Average	50%	40%	45%	75%	61%	68%		
City-Wide Average	56%	68%	61%	66%				

The study also examined average duration for on-street parking spaces, presenting the average length of time vehicles were parked. As shown in Table 2, the overall Average Parking Duration in Columbia City is slightly less than the City-Wide Average. However, the Average Duration in Columbia City for 1-hour and 2-hour spaces exceeded the City-Wide Average Duration for similarly restricted spaces. Also noteworthy is that the Average Duration for 1-hour, 2-hour, and Unrestricted spaces is virtually identical, suggesting a distinctly uniform duration by Columbia City parking users of 2 hours and 45 minutes.

TABLE 2: AVERAGE PARKING DURATION IN COLUMBIA CITY (in hours)								
Unrestricted 2-hour max 1-hour max Load zone Average								
Columbia City Average	2.8	2.7	2.9	1.1	2.6			
City-Wide Average         3.2         2.0         2.1         1.9         2.8								

# **NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING SURVEY RESULTS**

The *Columbia City Neighborhood Parking Survey* was administered between December 10, 2002 and January 15, 2003. The survey form was developed by members of the Columbia City Parking Workgroup and SDOT, and the concerns and ideas identified in the survey were used to help identify priorities. Many residents and business people were sent the surveys via email listserves maintained by the Columbia City Revitalization Committee (CCRC) and the Columbia City Business Association (CCBA). The survey form was also available at the Southeast Neighborhood Service Center, the Columbia City Library and on the SDOT's website.

The complete results of the *Columbia City Neighborhood Parking Survey* are attached to the Parking Action Strategy as an appendix.

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- A) Of the 51 survey respondents, 40% are employees, 24% are customers/clients/visitors, 20% are residents, 10% both live and work in Columbia City, and 6% identified themselves as business owners. All respondents indicated that they were over 16 years of age.
- B) The majority of responses, 40%, were from those who identified themselves as being employees of Columbia City. When combined with those who own a business, and those who both work or live in the neighborhood, well over half (56%) of the respondents brought a perspective to the survey that was knowledgeable about parking issues in Columbia City's commercial areas.

- C) One primary finding of the survey was that respondents like the parking situation in Columbia City because most parking (on- and off-street) is typically free and easy to find. The exception to this is concern about the lack of available parking at the Library and elsewhere in the neighborhood during special events, such as the Beatwalk and the Farmer's Market. Additionally, there is a shared concern amongst most respondents that parking will only become more difficult to find as development occurs and once the Edmunds light rail station opens.
- D) The most frequently used mode of travel in Columbia City by those responding to the survey is the car this was constant across each respondent group. In most groups, the second highest reported transportation mode is walking. Very low usage rates were reported for bus and bike ridership. Almost no usage was reported for carpools or vanpools.
- E) Of the 28 employees and business owners who completed the survey, 75% drive in the neighborhood on a daily basis. Mostly they park in free off-street lots or on-street in the business area. Sometimes they park on-street in the residential area. Customers, clients and visitors also mostly park on-street in the business area.
- F) While all respondents typically feel there is sufficient on-street residential parking, most felt there is never adequate parking for community events or for community services. The supply of customer parking lots and employee parking received mixed responses from different user groups.
- G) The survey respondents rated their highest and lowest priorities for the Parking Workgroup to address, shown below:

**Priority 1:** Creating new on-street parking spaces where possible

**Priority 2:** Impacts from the library expansion

**Priority 3:** Impact from special community events

**Priority 4:** Impacts from the Edmunds Light Rail Station Opening

**Priority 5:** Impact from future developments

**Priority 6:** Educating businesses and residents about changing on-street parking regulations

**Priority 7**: Ensuring there is adequate turnover within on-street parking spaces

**Priority 8**: Adding and removing delivery spaces or load zones

Within each respondent group the priorities were quite similar, with the exception of the business owners who gave a high rating to "ensuring there is adequate turnover within onstreet parking spaces."

- H) In order of priority, survey respondents said they would like to have more information about:
  - 1. How employers can provide transportation choices to their employees (26%)
  - 2. Finding safe bike routes or places to park bikes (23%)
  - 3. Changing on-street parking regulations (19%)
  - 4. Residential parking zones (16%)
  - 5. Taking the bus (13%)
  - 6. Joining a carpool or vanpool (3%)
- I) When asked what they liked about parking in Columbia City, survey respondents liked that both on and off-street parking was free and typically easy to find.
- J) When asked what they would most like to change about parking, each respondent group gave the following response:

**Residents:** more free on and off-street parking **Business Owners:** more customer parking **Employees:** more free, long-term parking

Clients, Customers & Visitors: create more parking, consider converting parallel to

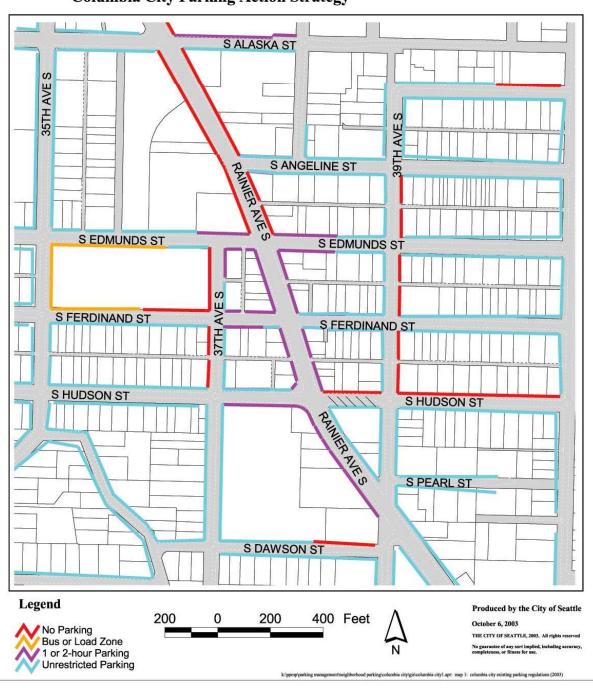
angled parking

People Who Both Live & Work (in Columbia City): improve traffic flow, pedestrian safety, and supply of parking for the library

- K) A number of comments were made about improving safety in the neighborhood by adding streetlights, by improving the safety (or perception of safety) at the existing parking lots to increase their utilization, and by improving safety on busses so people will ride them more and drive their cars less.
- L) A number of respondents made recommendations to improve traffic flow throughout the neighborhood including restricting the ability to take left-hand turns off of Rainier Ave S.

# The City of Seattle

# Map 1: Columbia City Existing Parking Regulations (2003) Columbia City Parking Action Strategy



# SHORT-TERM ACTIONS (4<sup>TH</sup> QUARTER 2003)

The theme of the short-term goals is to quickly make more parking available for short-term customer parking. The Workgroup would like to see these changes made in 2003.

The results of implementing the short-term actions are shown in *Map 2: Columbia City Proposed Parking Regulations*.

#### SHORT-TERM GOALS:

<u>Goal #1: Increase On-Street Parking</u> - Create new on-street parking spaces for businesses in the downtown area, for residents, and for library patrons.

# Strategies to Achieve Goal #1:

- a) Convert parallel to angled parking on the south-side of Angeline St east of Rainier Ave S (approximately 9 spaces could be gained), and the south side of Ferdinand St east of Rainier Ave S (approximately 8 spaces could be gained).
- b) Seek opportunities at Orca School to add parking on the streets adjacent to the school in no- parking areas or underutilized load zones. On 37th Ave S, between Edmunds and Ferdinand, move parking to the west side of the street (adjacent to Orca) to increase the number of parking spots (there are no curb cuts on the west side of the street).
- c) Educate Columbia City merchants about installing load-zones to provide adequate delivery spaces and consolidating or eliminating under-used load-zones to create parking spaces.
- d) Investigate possible improvements to S Hudson east of Rainier Ave S to improve pedestrian access on the south side of this block where back-in angled parking exists and intrudes into the pedestrian "desire line."

#### Implementation Plan to Achieve Goal #1:

- Typically SDOT will convert parallel to angled parking, or switch the sides of the road where parking is located when it receives a petition signed by 60% of the property owners on both sides of the block. Petitions are available by contacting the Making the Parking System Work program at 684-4208 or SDOT at 684-ROAD.
- Load zones can typically be added or removed by calling SDOT at 684-ROAD. Once a request has been made to remove a load zone, SDOT staff review surrounding load zone opportunities to ensure an adequate supply exists. To educate business people about opportunities to turn duplicative load zones into short-term customer parking spaces, the Columbia City Business Association could supply copies of the City's Green Guide to Parking Management at meetings, or refer people the online version. Door-to-door distribution of educational materials (available from SDOT) and one-on-one conversations with business owners is also an effective communication tool.

<u>Goal #2: Increase Enforcement for Short-Term Parking</u> - Ensure there is adequate turnover in on-street parking spaces.

# Strategies to Achieve Goal #2:

a) Improve enforcement of existing laws (no parking on parkway on S Hudson St and S Ferdinand St east of 39th Ave S on weekend nights) and provide enforcement education materials to residents in areas where frequent abuses occur.

# Implementation Plan to Achieve Goal #2:

 SDOT has communicated this information with the Seattle Police Department Parking Enforcement Officers (PEOs).

<u>Goal #3: Increase Short-Term Parking Supply</u> - Ensure that appropriate regulations (1-hour or 2-hour time limits) exist in the commercial area for customers, clients and visitors

# Strategies to Achieve Goal #3:

- a) The locations the workgroup recommended for adding time-limit signs include:
  - i. On S Ferdinand St, adjacent to businesses east of Rainier Ave S
  - ii. On S Hudson St within one block east and west of Rainier Ave S
  - iii. On 37th Street between S Edmonds St and S Ferdinand St
  - iv. On S Edmonds St adjacent to Orca School

# Implementation Plan to Achieve Goal #3:

 SDOT will install time limit signs after receiving a petition signed by 60% of the property owners on both sides of the block. Petitions are available by contacting the Making the Parking System Work program at 684-4208 or SDOT at 684-ROAD.

<u>Goal #4: Install Parking Directional Signage</u> - Install directional signage to direct customers and visitors to the supply of on- and off-street parking available off of Rainier Ave S in and near the downtown business core.

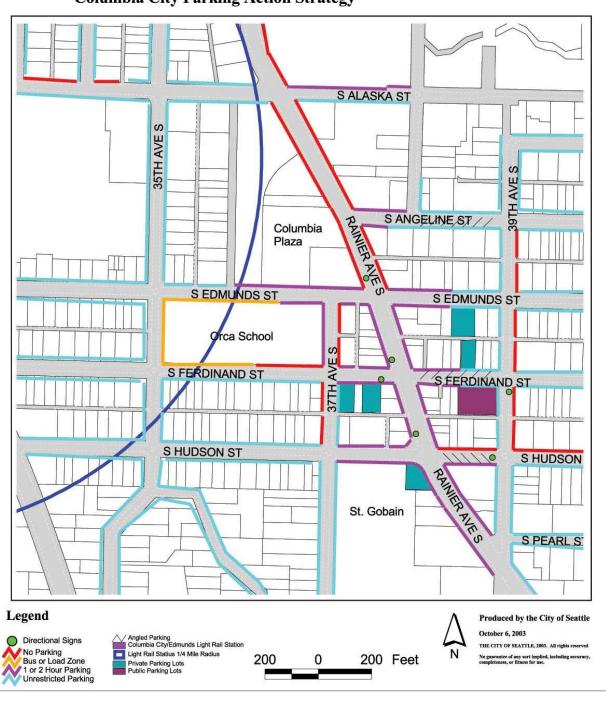
# Implementation Plan to Achieve Goal #3:

Making the Parking System Work staff can work with a community group or coalition to identify opportunities for parking directional signs. Grant funds are available for the community to use for sign design. SDOT staff will oversee the location and installation of signs. Signs could be the City's standard parking signs or bear a community logo and/or colors.



# The City of Seattle

# Map 2: Columbia City Proposed Parking Regulations Columbia City Parking Action Strategy



### MID-TERM ACTIONS (2004)

In the mid-term, the goals of the workgroup are two-fold: 1) to make the best use of existing offstreet parking, and 2) to create programs that educate and encourage visitor and clients about parking opportunities and encourage ways to reduce drive-alone trips to area businesses, events, and services. The workgroup intends many of these changes to be made in 2004.

#### MID-TERM GOALS

<u>Goal #5: Develop Lot Sharing Opportunities</u> - Look for lot-sharing opportunities between the Library, Post Office, Columbia Plaza, Orca School and other neighborhood parking lots.

# Implementation Plan to Achieve Goal #5:

Most lot-sharing opportunities are identified by local property owners. A community organization will need to take the initiative in implementing this strategy and then partner with SDOT. SDOT can assist with convening a committee or meeting of parking lot and/or property owners, if City assistance is needed.

Goal #6: Develop Marketing and Validation Programs - Educate visitors to the Library, and area businesses and events about parking opportunities, parking courtesy, and many means of non-drive-alone transportation to and within Columbia City.

Events or activities with a known or anticipated parking impact on surrounding residential areas include the Farmer's Market (Wednesdays from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. from May through October), Beatwalk (First Friday of each month, April through December), The Royal Esquire Club (at 5016 Rainier Ave S) and the new Goods and Crafts Market and cinema at the Ark Lodge Building.

Community groups or coalitions (i.e., the Columbia City Revitalization Committee, the Columbia City Business Association, the Bicycle Alliance, etc.) can inquire to the *Making the Parking System Work* program for availability of funds to design and implement projects.

#### Strategies to Achieve Goal #6:

- a) Increase marketing of the Farmer's Market parking validation program and expand to other merchants and events. Marketing elements could include directional signs, maps, brochures, and transportation information on the rainiervalley.org website, window decals, and signs at participating lots. Incentives can be offered to event patrons to access events and stores by means other than their car (e.g., coupons if they walk, bus, carpool or ride their bike to the market).
- b) Create an educational campaign or business corridor-wide parking validation program using Making the Parking System Work grant funds this would require the oversight of a community "champion" organization or coalition. Elements could include campaigns, such as "Bike to Shop" or "Bike to BeatWalk," and/or directional

- signs, wayfinding tools, maps and other printed materials, (such as posters, maps or brochures) about parking locations and access opportunities.
- c) Develop a plan for how the community may wish to update, revise, reprint, and distribute the Columbia City Map when the existing supply runs out.
- d) Install new bike racks and disseminate information about safe bike routes. This action can be accomplished relatively quickly with a phone call to SDOT at 684-ROAD

# *Implementation Plan to Achieve Goal #6:*

- Consultant and start-up assistance is available through the SDOT to design educational campaigns and parking validation programs. Such programs typically create an incentive or "validation" for those who drive, bike, walk and bus to make purchases in the business district. Elements of a successful advertising campaign include print and web ads, parking lot signs, collateral materials for participating businesses, and tokens all working together to create a validation program "brand." On-going administration must be provided by a community organization, and this is often beyond a volunteer effort and requires paid labor. A plan for providing this administration should be developed prior to, or as part of, developing the program or campaign.
- A reprint of the Columbia City Map could be done for less than the cost of the original. Funding could include ads from area businesses, institutions and sponsors that could be sufficient for a match for a Neighborhood Matching Fund. Or a reprint could be part of a larger marketing or validation project.

# LONG-TERM ACTIONS (2004 AND BEYOND)

Long-term goals of the workgroup include increasing the parking-related resources the business community has at its disposal and monitoring the development of the agreement between the City and Sound Transit regarding the Edmunds Street Light Rail Station.

#### LONG-TERM GOALS

<u>Goal #7: Develop Business Access Package</u> - Develop programs that provide employees of area small businesses with tools and incentives for getting to work without using a car, or for making fewer drive-alone trips.

# Strategies to Achieve Goal #7:

- a) A community organization or neighborhood "champion" can provide information to employers and employees about alternative ways to access Columbia City without using cars, and SDOT could be engaged as a partner in this effort. This will free existing spaces for short-term customer use. This information could be provided through a transportation-fair for Columbia City businesses.
- b) Create an Access Package administered by the Columbia City Business Association and/or other organization to provide transit, Guaranteed Ride Home and car-sharing club benefits to employees who do not drive to work.

# Implementation Plan to Achieve Goal #7:

Consultant and start-up assistance is available through the *Making the Parking System Work* program to design trip reduction programs. Design, execution and on-going administration of trip reduction programs must be provided by a community organization, and this is often beyond a volunteer effort and requires paid labor. A plan for providing this administration should be developed prior to, or as part of, developing the program.

<u>Goal #8: Address Impacts from Future Developments</u> - Investigate opportunities to purchase community-owned or business-organization owned parking lots to replace existing off-street facilities as they are developed.

The earlier recommendations to improve the use of Columbia City's existing parking system focus on improving utilization of existing off-street parking facilities. However, these lots are slated to be redeveloped, bringing new residences and/or businesses to Columbia City that increase demand for parking while reducing the existing supply.

# Strategies to Achieve Goal #8:

a) Investigate opportunities to purchase community-owned or business-organization owned parking lots to replace existing facilities as they are developed. Community ownership gives businesses control over parking rates, validation programs, and hours of operation.

# *Implementation Plan to Achieve Goal #8:*

The University District has community-managed lots owned by the University District Parking Associates (UDPA). West Seattle and Ballard also have community-owned facilities. Business organizations in these neighborhoods could be contacted to discuss opportunities and issues associated with purchasing and managing community parking lots.

Goal #9: Address Impacts from the Edmunds Light Rail Station Opening - Organize community members to monitor Sound Transit parking-mitigation commitments for the estimated opening of the Edmunds Street Light Rail Station in 2009.

# Strategies to Achieve Goal #9:

- a) The proposed agreement between the City and Sound Transit calls for:
  - i. Sound Transit to conduct inventories of the parking supply within ½ mile of each station as well as community outreach to determine desire for the installation of time-restrictions in commercial areas and Residential Parking Zones in residential areas.
  - ii. Sound Transit to install the necessary signs to restrict parking prior to the opening of each station, depending upon community support (including a possible RPZ).
  - iii. The City will monitor all parking controls during the first two years after the system opens and will work with the community to make any necessary adjustments.
  - iv. Sound Transit will implement a public education and marketing campaign related to hide-and-ride parking and access to the light rail stations.

# Implementation Plan to Achieve Goal #9:

• SDOT and Sound Transit will start the parking study and provide outreach to the community in the year before the stations are scheduled to open.

#### COLUMBIA CITY NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING SURVEY RESULTS

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#### Introduction

The Columbia City Neighborhood Parking Survey was administered between December 10, 2002 and January 15, 2003. The survey form was developed by members of the Columbia City Neighborhood Parking Workgroup, a group of residents, business people, and Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) staff working together to identify low-cost, commonsense parking management and access solutions. The goal of the Parking Workgroup was to use the concerns and ideas identified in the survey to help them identify their priorities.

Many residents and business people were sent the surveys via email listserves maintained by the Columbia City Revitalization Committee (CCRC) and the Columbia City Business Association. The survey form was also available at the Southeast Neighborhood Service Center, the Columbia Library and on the City of Seattle's website.

TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEY RESPONSES					
Web responses	18				
Email responses	8				
Mail responses	11				
Surveys completed at the Columbia Library	8				
Surveys completed at the Neighborhood Service Center	3				
Surveys submitted by fax	3				

A total of 51 residents, employees, business owners, customers, and visitors completed the survey. Many respondents represented many of these categories at once and brought a variety of perspectives to their ideas and concerns about parking and access issues in Columbia City. Throughout the survey, most responses are shown for the respondents as a whole and for each

respondent group: business owners, employees, residents, those who live and work in the neighborhood, and customers/clients/visitors.

#### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

- A) Of the 51 survey respondents, 40% are employees, 24% are customers/clients/visitors, 20% are residents, 10% both live and work in Columbia City, and 6% identified themselves as business owners. All respondents indicated that they were over 16 years of age.
- B) The majority of responses, 40%, were from those who identified themselves as being employees of Columbia City. When combined with those who own a business, and those who both work or live in the neighborhood, well over half (56%) of the respondents brought a perspective to the survey that was knowledgeable about parking issues in Columbia City's commercial areas.
- C) One primary finding of the survey was that respondents like the parking situation in Columbia City because most parking (on- and off-street) is typically free and easy to find. The exception to this is concern about the lack of available parking at the Library and elsewhere in the neighborhood during special events, such as the Beatwalk and the Farmer's Market. Additionally, there is a shared concern amongst most respondents that parking will only become more difficult to find as development occurs and once the Edmunds light rail station opens.
- D) The most frequently used mode of travel in Columbia City by those responding to the survey is the car this was constant across each respondent group. In most groups, the second highest reported transportation mode is walking. Very low usage rates were reported for bus and bike ridership. Almost no usage was reported for carpools or vanpools.
- E) Of the 28 employees and business owners who completed the survey, 75% drive in the neighborhood on a daily basis. Mostly they park in free off-street lots or on-street in the business area. Sometimes they park on-street in the residential area. Customers, clients and visitors also mostly park on-street in the business area.
- F) While all respondents typically feel there is sufficient on-street residential parking, most felt there is never adequate parking for community events or for community services. The supply of customer parking lots and employee parking received mixed responses from different user groups.
- G) The survey respondents rated their highest and lowest priorities for the Parking Workgroup to address, shown below:

- **Priority 1:** Creating new on-street parking spaces where possible
- **Priority 2:** Impacts from the library expansion
- **Priority 3:** Impact from special community events
- Priority 4: Impacts from the Edmunds Light Rail Station Opening
- **Priority 5:** Impact from future developments
- **Priority 6:** Educating businesses and residents about changing on-street parking regulations
- **Priority 7**: Ensuring there is adequate turnover within on-street parking spaces
- **Priority 8**: Adding and removing delivery spaces or load zones

Within each respondent group the priorities were quite similar, with the exception of the business owners who gave a high rating to "ensuring there is adequate turnover within onstreet parking spaces."

- H) In order of priority, survey respondents said they would like to have more information about:
  - 1. How employers can provide transportation choices to their employees (26%)
  - 2. Finding safe bike routes or places to park bikes (23%)
  - 3. Changing on-street parking regulations (19%)
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  - 6. Joining a carpool or vanpool (3%)
- I) When asked what they liked about parking in Columbia City, survey respondents liked that both on and off-street parking was free and typically easy to find.
- J) When asked what they would most like to change about parking, each respondent group gave the following response:

**Residents:** more free on and off-street parking **Business Owners:** more customer parking **Employees:** more free, long-term parking

Clients, Customers & Visitors: create more parking, consider converting parallel to

angled parking

**People Who Both Live & Work (in Columbia City):** improve traffic flow, pedestrian safety, and supply of parking for the library

- K) A number of comments were made about improving safety in the neighborhood by adding streetlights, by improving the safety (or perception of safety) at the existing parking lots to increase their utilization, and by improving safety on busses so people will ride them more and drive their cars less.
- L) A number of respondents made recommendations to improve traffic flow throughout the neighborhood including restricting the ability to take left-hand turns off of Rainier Ave S.

#### SURVEY RESULTS

# Question 1: "I am a Columbia City resident, business owner, employee, customer, and/or visitor."

The purpose of this question was to identify the priorities of different users of the parking and transportation system. Different users often have a different perception of the parking "problem". Residents want long-term car storage, business owners want ample short-term parking for their customers, and many employees are competing with both groups to avoid paying for long-term parking.

Of the 51 respondents, 20 identified themselves as employees, 10 as residents, 12 as customers/clients/visitors, five as those who both live and work in Columbia City, and three as business owners. Figure 1 shows the percentage response from each category.

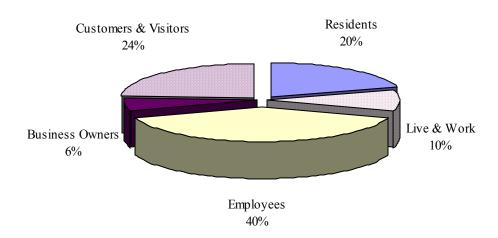


Figure 1: "I am a Columbia City..."

# Question 2: "I am over/under 16 years of age."

Of the 51 respondents, 48 stated they were over the age of 16 and three left the question unanswered. The purpose of asking this question was to differentiate between those who have legal access to an automobile.

# Question 3: "On a monthly basis, I get around Columbia City by..."

Figure 3, "I get around every day by..." shows what percentage of survey respondents said that they use different transportation modes **every day** of the week. For all respondents and for each respondent group (residents, employees, business owners, those who live and work in the neighborhood, customers/visitors), the most frequently used travel mode was the car.

Customers and visitors do not register in Figure 3 because they did not report driving every day in the neighborhood. However, two-thirds of the customers and visitors did report that they get around Columbia City by car at least once a week.

Figure 3: "I get around every day by..."

## Residents

- All resident-respondents drive in Columbia City at least twice a month
- 60% drive every day and 80% drive more than once a week
- 70% walk at least once a week
- 30% ride the bus and of those, 66% ride it once or twice a month
- 40% ride their bike at least once a month, and 50% of those do so at least twice a month

# **BUSINESS OWNERS**

- 75% drive in the neighborhood every day and 100% drive more than once a week
- 25% walk in the neighborhood once a week

## THOSE WHO LIVE AND WORK IN COLUMBIA CITY

- 75% drive every day and 100% drive at least once a week
- 75% walk at least once a week
- 50% either ride their bike or bus once a week
- One respondent carpools more than once a week

#### **EMPLOYEES**

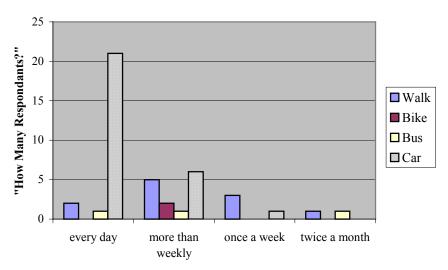
- 75% drive every day and 100% drive more than once a week
- 35% walk through the neighborhood; many commented they do so on their lunch hour
- 10% ride the bus. While one respondent rides it every day, the other rides it twice a month.
- One respondent rides their bike more than once a week.

# CUSTOMERS, CLIENTS & VISITORS

- 92% drive at least once a month to access goods, services or friends in Columbia City and 36% drive more than once a week
- 25% ride the bus
- One respondent rides their bike once a month
- 17% walk in the neighborhood once a month

Figure 3B, "All employee and business owner travel modes and frequencies" shows the combined results for all respondents who work in Columbia City – those who denoted themselves as either employees or businesses owners (including those who both live and work in the neighborhood). Of this group, 100% use their car at least once a week, with 75% reporting daily usage.

Figure 3b: All employee and business owner travel modes and frequencies



# Question 4: "When I travel in Columbia City, I typically do so at the following times..."

Figure 4, "I travel at what time..." shows when the highest amount of all respondents' travel occurs by time of day, time of week, and by type of transportation.

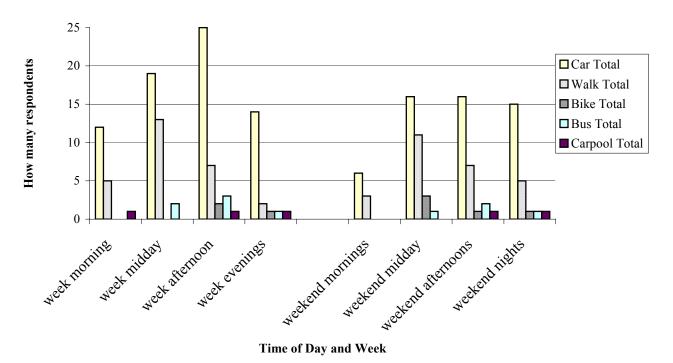


Figure 4: "I travel at what time..."

Regardless of the time of week or day, the amount of car travel that occurs is higher than the other mode choices. The highest reported car use is on weekday afternoons, between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. This time period captures the evening rush hour.

Walking is the second highest mode choice, especially during mid-day or afternoons. Carpools, the bus, and bike-riding are used at similarly low amounts regardless of the time of week.

# Question 5: When (and if) I do park in Columbia City, I typically do so...?

Respondents were asked to designate how often (Always, Mostly, Sometimes, Never) they typically park on-street in the business area, off-street in a pay lot, off-street in a free lot, on-street in the residential area, or off-street in the residential area (i.e. in a driveway or garage). Figure 5 shows the frequency of all responses by group, regardless of whether a respondent said they *Always*, *Mostly* or *Sometimes* parked in that location.

From Figure 5 we see that the majority of parking occurs on-street in the business area and onstreet in the residential area with different groups forming the highest usage in these two categories.

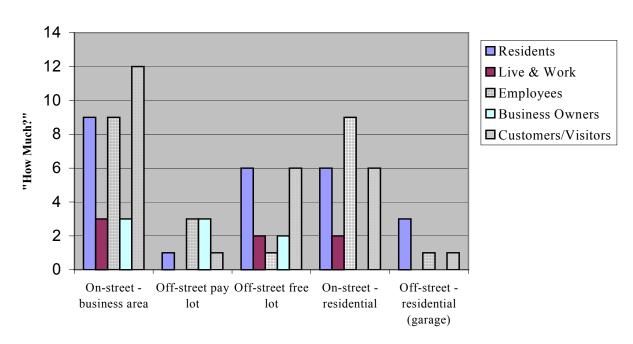


Figure 5: "I typically park..."

Columbia City's customers and visitors mostly park either on-street in the business area or offstreet in a free lot. These respondents sometimes park on-street in the residential area or offstreet in a pay lot.

Table 5: Where do customers and visitors park?							
		Always	Mostly	Sometimes			
Customers/Visitors	On-street - business area	33%	50%	17%			
Customers/Visitors	Off-street pay lot	0%	0%	8%			
Customers/Visitors	Off-street free lot	0%	17%	33%			
Customers/Visitors	On-street - residential	0%	8%	42%			
Customers/Visitors	Off-street - residential	0%	0%	8%			
	(garage)						

Because of the high response rate of employees and business people who say that they drive on a daily basis (75%), the locations where these users park was examined. As shown in Figure 5b, "Business Owner and Employee Parking Locations", the majority mostly park either off-street in the free lot or on-street in the business area.

# Question 6: "In Columbia City, I believe we have adequate..."

Respondents were asked to state whether they thought there was *Always*, *Sometimes* or *Never* enough on-street residential parking, on-street customer parking, customer parking lots, community event parking (both in lots and on-street), community services parking (such as for the library and the neighborhood service center), and employee parking.

Figure 6, "The amount of parking is adequate..." shows the answers of all respondents based on the location of the parking. Some trends that emerge include:

- There is a general perception that the amount of parking available for neighborhood services, such as the Columbia Library, is inadequate. This is mirrored in several of the comments made in individual responses (see Questions 9 and 10).
- Respondents believe the amount of parking available for special events, such as the Farmer's Market and the BeatWalk, is insufficient.
- On-street customer parking is also perceived to be inadequate, though many respondents said in response to Question 9, "What do you like most about parking in Columbia City" that they liked that parking is typically easy to find.

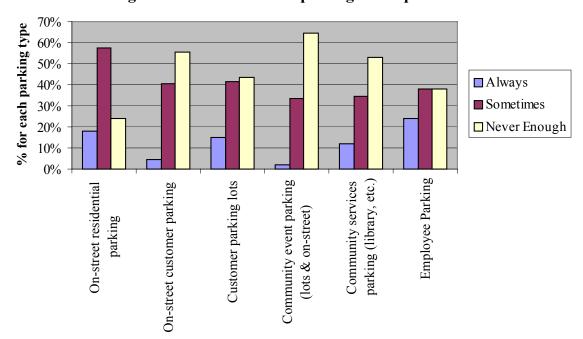


Figure 6: "The amount of parking is adequate..."

# Question 7: "I would like the Columbia City Neighborhood Parking Workgroup to focus on the following issues..."

In response to this question, those completing the survey were asked to rank eight different concerns from highest to lowest priority with extra space given for additional concerns. The focus areas were:

- Creating new on-street parking spaces where possible
- Impacts from the Edmunds Light Rail Station opening (2009)
- Ensuing there is turnover within on-street parking spaces
- Impacts from the library expansion
- Adding and removing delivery spaces or load zones
- Impact from special community events (The Farmer's Market, Beatwalk, etc.)
- Impact from future developments
- Educating business people and residents about changing on-street parking regulations

Answers to this question were tabulated in two ways. In the first, the rank assigned by each respondent was summed and it was assumed that the priority with the lowest overall score was of the highest priority. In the second way, the number of "1's" that were given out were counted to gauge the strength of feeling for each particular item. The top two priorities for each workgroup based on these methods are shown in Table 7.

The desired workgroup priorities were ranked by **all respondents** is as follows:

- Priority 1: Creating new on-street parking spaces where possible
- Priority 2: Impacts from the library expansion
- Priority 3: Impact from special community events
- Priority 4: Impacts from the Edmunds Light Rail Station Opening
- Priority 5: Impact from future developments
- Priority 6: Educating business people and residents about changing on-street parking regulations
- Priority 7: Ensuring there is adequate turnover within on-street parking spaces
- Priority 8: Adding and removing delivery spaces or load zones

TABLE 7: HIGHEST PRIORITIES FOR EACH RESPONDENT GROUP				
Business Owners	Priority 1: Creating new on-street parking spaces where possible			
Business Owners	Priority 2: Ensuing there is turnover within on-street parking spaces			
Customous and Visitous	Priority 1: Impacts from special community events			
Customers and Visitors	Priority 2: Impacts from the library expansion			
Employage	Priority 1: Impacts from the library expansion			
Employees	Priority 2: Creating new on-street parking spaces where possible			
Live & Work	Priority 1: Creating new on-street parking spaces where possible			
Live & Work	Priority 2: Impacts from the Edmunds Light Rail Station opening			
Residents	Priority 1: Impacts from the library expansion			
Residents	Priority 2: Impact from special community events			

In addition to these focus areas, survey respondents also had a number of their own concerns and ideas. Those write-in comments are shown below:

- Off-street parking
- Off-street lot parking west of Rainier Avenue
- Subsidized bus passes for employees
- Improving the visual treatment and safety (or the perception of safety) of using the Columbia City parking lots
- Develop shared-use agreements with parking lot owners
- Educating people about not having to have parking immediately adjacent to their offices, place of business - get used to walking a little
- [Improve] Safety on buses in South Seattle
- Making street parking a priority for residents

# Question 8: "I wish I had more information about..."

Respondents were asked to choose which of the following parking and access related tools they would like information about so that the Parking Workgroup can better tailor the information they provide to the community:

- Taking the bus
- Finding safe bike routes or a place to park bikes
- How employers can provide transportation choices to their employees
- Joining a carpool or vanpool
- Changing on-street parking regulations in front of my house/apartment/business
- Residential parking zones

Table 8, "I wish I had more information about..." shows the percentage of all respondents who would like more information.

Table 8: "I wish I had more informa	tion about"
Employer provided transportation options	26%
Safe bike routes/bike parking opportunities	23%
Changing on-street parking regulations	19%
Residential Parking Zones	16%
Taking the Bus	13%
Carpools and Vanpools	3%

One respondent also wrote in that they are interested in having more information provided about off-street parking opportunities.

# Question 9: "What do you like most about parking in Columbia City?"

In response to this open-ended question, respondents overwhelmingly liked one quality about the existing parking situation in Columbia City: it is free.

#### RESIDENTS

Columbia City residents are in agreement that the free parking, both on and off-street, is a positive. Of the 9 out of 13 residents who responded to this question, 20% mentioned the free on-street parking, 10% commented on the lack of parking meters, 30% mentioned the free off-street parking, and 40% commented on the ease at which parking can usually be found.

Additional comments about the likes of residents include:

- "The 'pay' lots behind shops/restaurants don't check if you pay on weekends."
- "I have the freedom to park across the street from my home without restriction."
- "So far, during the day, I can 'bop' down to Columbia City, find free on-street parking, and leave!"

# **BUSINESS OWNERS**

Four out of the five responding business owners stated their "likes" about parking in Columbia City. Two of the respondents like that the parking is free, and one commented that "parking enforcement leaves business owners alone." The fourth respondent likes that "there are some free lots, privately-owned, available to employees and shoppers – but these won't be around forever."

#### **EMPLOYEES**

Only 50% of employee respondents answered this question, and two of those commented that there was nothing they liked about parking in Columbia City. Of those who responded with their likes, the highest number of responses (33%) was appreciative of the ease at which parking could be found

#### CUSTOMERS, CLIENTS AND VISITORS

Five of the 12 customer, client and visitor respondents answered this question, with two stated that there was nothing that they liked about parking in Columbia City. Of the three respondents who did, one liked that it is free, another liked the time-limits, and a third commented that there are "still a few spots to park close by." One respondent asked that the one-hour limit be increased.

#### LIVE & WORK IN COLUMBIA CITY

Of the group (3 respondents) that both residents and works in the neighborhood, the comments were representative of the other residents and business people – they like the availability of free, on-street, non-metered parking. One respondent said that he/she liked "that there is sufficient parking and there is not an over-abundance of parking – i.e. that there are not seas of parking lots which become problems."

# Question 10: "What would you most like to change about parking in Columbia City?"

Not surprisingly, the items that people would most like to change about parking in Columbia City are those on which they would like the Parking Workgroup to focus their efforts.

#### RESIDENTS

10 of the 13 resident-respondents answered this question (77%). Of those, almost half (45%) commented they would most like to see more free parking made available either in lots or onstreet.

One respondent recommended that "in the evenings, make parking at the bank and plaza available to library patrons and other users of Columbia City. Sharing parking spaces when businesses (like the bank) are closed would engender a feeling of community, mutual support, and sharing. In fact, it would be nice if banks and other stores/businesses would make their lots available for free in the evenings for restaurant and theatre use. [This] would make this whole city friendlier." Another idea to create more parking while also reducing traffic speed is to allow parking on the north side of Hudson Street east of Rainier Avenue. 27% of responding residents wanted to see more Library parking and 9% desired more Market parking.

Two comments were made about improving safety, one about the free parking lot and one about the buses. One responded that they change they would like to make would be to "clean up the lot and make it feel safer and be easier to get around in." Another stated they would "increase the safety on the buses" because "I would drive less frequently and not need to park."

#### Additional comments include:

- "Residents [should] have first priority for parking by their homes."
- "More free lots perhaps validate parking if you are a customer of a Columbia City business."
- "Fix the horrible flow in and out of the post office."

#### **BUSINESS OWNERS**

100% of responding business owners (five respondents) answered this question, and 60% stated they would like to see more parking made available for their customers. One would like to provide more parking lots and another would like to add on-street parking to increase the available for customers.

One responding business owner would like to see the City clean up the streets so that customers will feel comfortable parking in on-street parking spaces. They would also like to see regulations to limit on-street parking to two hours and less, and are even willing to consider the installation of parking meters if the revenue is reinvested in Columbia City.

One business owner said they would like to see better signage installed to direct patrons to the existing parking lots, but they acknowledged there are restrictions because the neighborhood is a landmark district.

#### **EMPLOYEES**

Three-fourths of responding employees answered this question, and they have a variety of items for changes that could made around parking, access, and transportation issues in the neighborhood. Figure 10, "Things that Employees Would Like to Change About Parking..." shows the frequency about employees desired changes. While the majority of responding employees would like to see more free, long-term parking, which is consistent with the fact of 75% of responding employees drive in Columbia City on a daily basis, a number were more concerned with traffic management issues.

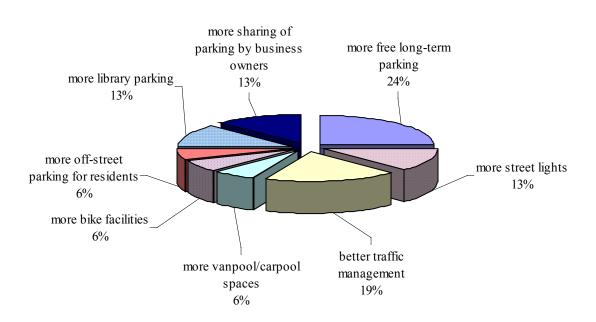


Figure 10: Things Employees Would Like to Change About Parking...

Ideas to improve parking in and access to Columbia City are:

- Add more vanpool/carpool spots.
- Add clearer designation of bike routes and places to park bikes.
- Balance parking options for residents and visitors, employees, etc.
- We need more parking for employees.
- Off-street parking for residents people park on dirt paths that should be planting strips or sidewalks on the many unimproved residential streets surrounding Columbia City's Business District. Makes neighborhood look unorganized and frankly unattractive. People often park in the wrong direction, at angles and every-which-way. It also means that residents are parking on the streets [and] utilizing spots that could be used for shoppers. Residents may see it from the other perspective that is "all the shoppers [are] in their 'personal' spaces".
- Allow library parking at Columbia Plaza.
- Have more parking for customers and employees a big parking lot [that] customers, employees and businesses can us

• Employees of City [of Seattle] offices should have permits to park on-street for 8 hours or come to agreement for businesses to share their parking with employees of [the] City.

# Ideas to improve traffic management include:

- More than parking, my issues are with left-hand turn off of Rainier and the lack of pedestrian safety (jay-walkers and drivers alike).
- [If] traffic on Rainier would be slower, [then] getting out of cars would be less worrisome.
- Traffic congestion [is] created by drivers making left-hand turns off of Rainier Ave. This happens particularly on 'Farmer's Market' days, but also during regular commute hours. I believe there should be [either] left-turn lanes or no left turns allowed.

# Comments related to safety include:

- [I would like to add] lighting on the business-district side streets [off Rainier].
- Increase public safety elements, such as street lights, for evening parkers.
- Pedestrian safety The majority of drivers do not stop for pedestrians in crosswalks. Likewise, pedestrians frequently cross in the middle of the block, putting themselves and drivers at risk. This is particularly rampant on Rainier Ave. I think there should be more police action against drivers and pedestrians alike.

#### Other comments:

• Arguments occur between businesses due to parking. Business owners are stingy with their alley parking (on) Hudson and Ferdinand.

# CUSTOMERS, CLIENTS AND VISITORS

11 of the 12 customers, clients and visitors completed this question in the survey. Ten (over 90%) had ideas about ways to create more parking supply in Columbia City or otherwise supported the need for more parking. Of those respondents, 40% recommended investigating the conversion of parallel parking to back-in angled parking. One of those respondents said they would like to look at creating one-way streets to increase the amount of angled parking.

# Other parking-related ideas included:

- Adding on-street parking on both sides of Rainier between Alaska and Edmonds Street
- Using the Orca lot on Market days, better parking in the library.
- Seeing if we can use the parking next to Columbia Plaza on a routine basis, [though] it would be unavailable during the Farmer's Market.
- Adding more on-street parking close to businesses or making the free parking lots behind businesses feel safer with better access to businesses.

#### One traffic-management related suggestion was to:

Either add left turn signals off of Rainier or limit left turn access since this often causes backups and delays on Rainier, particularly when there is a bus in the right hand lane and traffic trying to turn in the other lane - I realize this is traffic-related, not parking-related, but affects the Columbia City experience nonetheless.

### LIVE & WORK IN COLUMBIA CITY

There were three things that those who both live and work in Columbia City would like to change, one related to parking, one related to traffic-management and pedestrian-safety, and one related to lifestyle changes.

#### Comments:

- [The] Library lot is too small.
- [Install] Better crosswalk areas from one side of Rainier to the other. If you want to do something on the west side of Rainier, it's horrible to park on the east side and try to cross the street
- Improve the responsiveness or cycling of [the] stoplights. It takes too long for the Rainier lights to turn red. It would be nice to have longer green lights for the side streets on Farmer's Market days so the traffic would flow onto Rainier better.
- Get people used to walking a little farther and from their cars.

# COLUMBIA CITY NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING SURVEY

Thanks for taking a few minutes of your time to complete the Columbia City Neighborhood Parking Survey. This information will be used by a group of residents, employees, business owners and neighborhood users who are addressing parking issues and looking at a variety of ways for people to get around the neighborhood. Please return the survey form by January 15, 2003! You can submit your answers via email to meghan.shepard@seattle.gov, complete it by hand and mail it to the Columbia City Parking Workgroup c/o Meghan Shepard, Seattle Department of Transportation, 700 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 3900, Seattle WA, 98104, drop it off at the Southeast Neighborhood Service Center at 4859 Rainier Avenue S, or complete it online at www.seattle.gov/transportation/neighborhoodparking.htm.

I am a Columbia City	(please che	ck all	that apply)						
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